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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ELARABY (Egypt)

later: Mr. SUH (Vice-Chairman) (Republic of Korea)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. KIBIDI NGOVUKA (Zaire)(interpretation from French): At the very outset I should like to express the great pleasure of Zaire at seeing the Ambassador of Egypt, representative of a fraternal African country with age-old ties to mine, at the head of this important Committee.

At the beginning of this week Egypt was shaken by an earthquake that left in its wake a heavy loss of human life, not to mention serious material damage. Zaire extends its most sincere condolences to the Republic of Egypt and its people.

Without resorting to the usual platitudes, I should nevertheless like to pay a tribute to your unanimously recognized and appreciated abilities as a diplomat. The First Committee, devoted as it is to political and disarmament affairs and to international peace and security, could not be in better hands. Zaire, which has in the past had the privilege of presiding over the Committee's work, will spare no effort to assist you, in so far as it can, in realizing the goals you have set for yourself.

I should also like to extend my warm congratulations to the other officers of the Committee, who will, I am sure, provide you with the effective and fruitful cooperation needed for the success of your mandate.

On the threshold of the third millenium, the world has undergone far-reaching changes, so much so that the geopolitical map has been altered dramatically. There is no word of East-West conflicts, and while the Warsaw Pact is now but a memory, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for its part, now without a foe, is in the process of restructuring itself.

(Mr. Kibidi Ngovuka, Zaire)

Communism has lost its appeal, and the ideological quarrels that once made up the fabric of international political life have disappeared. The Russian Federation and all the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, with all the other States of Eastern Europe, are now facing new experiences characterized by democratic and liberal reforms in the economic, socio-cultural and political spheres.

In fact, the cold war is definitely over.

We are looking towards the world's future with new eyes, with hope, with great optimism tinged with doubts and misgivings. Indeed, given the rise of nationalism - even of racism and even tribalism - we might wonder whether the notion of international solidarity is not going to crumble and thus lose much of its substance in some European, Asian and African countries. In fact, we are wondering what the status of Africa, beset as it is with countless economic problems, will be in the concerns of the international community.

In other words, changes will not always lead to a resolution of all the problems linked to disarmament, peace and international security. They will, of course, contribute to it, but we must establish strategies to do better in these areas where selfishness, national interests and psychological qualms could prevail over the imperatives of true solidarity between the States of the South and of the North. In the final analysis, mankind is at a historic crossroads and must make a choice between building international peace and security on the basis of economic growth for all States or continuing to ahhere to such old ideas as nuclear deterrence, which belong to another era.

Today, one wonders whether nuclear disarmament is a myth or a reality. I should like to point to some clear signs of a policy of lasting disarmament. In particular, there are the remarkable efforts made by the Russian Federation

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and the United States, which have, through a series of treaties, especially the implementation of the Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, for the first time eliminated an entire category of nuclear weapons; the signature of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Arms (START), which provides for a substantial reduction in strategic nuclear weapons in a short time, and announcements by Presidents Bush, Gorbachev and Yeltsin of the elimination of many nuclear-weapon systems after decades of waiting.

Among other clear signs of a policy of lasting disarmament, we would point to the accession of China and South Africa to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the recent safeguards arrangements of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which have strengthened the non-proliferation regime, as has the moratorium on nuclear testing until the end of this year announced by France early in 1992. All of these developments will have a positive impact on questions of nuclear disarmament.

At this point I should like to recall that in 1990 the Disarmament Commission adopted a Declaration making the 1990s the Third Disarmament Decade. In fact, that Declaration was an admission of the failure of the Second Disarmament Decade proclaimed in 1978 within the framework of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

If it is true that the new international climate makes it reasonable to expect more progress in the field of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, it is good that that vital question should not be sidestepped and that a non-discriminatory situation be established between nuclear Powers and countries that do not produce nuclear weapons or that have no nuclear research

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facilities. While nuclear States could produce new generations of nuclear weapons without subjecting themselves to any control, other non-nuclear-weapon States have been relegated to inactivity merely by being signatories to the non-proliferation Treaty. That Treaty should be universal, that is, it should concern all States and all aspects and it is only in that way that the world can avoid a nuclear disaster.

My delegation shares the proposals put forward a short time ago by Mr. Kozyrev, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the non-targeting of strategic weapons, the elimination of alert status and the separation of vectors and warheads. As for the fissionable material derived from the dismantling of existing warheads, my country shares the opinion expressed by some countries that such material should be handed over to the International Atomic Energy Agency to be used for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Kibidi Ngovuka, Zaire)

With respect to the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, my delegation joined other delegations in taking an active part in the process of drafting that text. We congratulate all those who helped craft this effective instrument, which will make it possible to eliminate chemical and bacteriological weapons from the list of weapons of mass destruction. With this Convention mankind has taken a step forward; we hope it will be signed without reservation by all members of the international community. My delegation also hopes that the draft resolution before us on chemical and bacteriological weapons will be adopted by consensus.

The world is torn by many regional conflicts. We would recall the fighting that rages in the countries of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union; we would recall Somalia. Everywhere there is ruin, desolation, famine, death striking down the innocent: children, men, women, the elderly, all helpless. The daily tragedy strikes at our hearts.

And yesterday it was the Iraq-Kuwait conflict, with tons of bombs showered on Iraq and with massive destruction in Kuwait. Then there is the Arab-Israeli conflict, which has been with us far too long.

Regional conflicts with diverse causes - poorly defined boundaries, non-recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities in certain territories, religious discrimination, envy of the wealth of neighbouring countries, power-seeking and so forth - sometimes end in true conflagrations with unforeseeable dimensions.

These regional conflicts absorb a great deal of money, which is invested in the purchase of conventional weapons the transfer of which often takes place with the complicity of industrialized weapon-producing States. The international community is right to be concerned about the question of

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international arms transfers. That is why my delegation has always been in favour of regional disarmament, not in an isolated context, but in a well-defined context of comprehensive disarmament world-wide.

In our subregion, Central Africa, we have established - in conformity with resolution 46/37 B, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures", and with the active support of the Secretary-General - a permanent consultative committee on questions of security in Central Africa. While there are no open or any other kind of conflicts between our States, and while we are not arms manufacturers, this permanent consultative committee can serve as a framework for discussion to resolve potential problems that could jeopardize the peace and security of our States. The delegation of Cameroon, which hosted the committee's first organizational meeting at Yaounde from 27 to 31 July 1992, will be submitting a draft resolution entitled "Regional confidence-building measures" sponsored by all the States of our subregion.

In the context of the African continent, Zaire, in conformity with resolutions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has long called for the declaration of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. South Africa, the only country on our continent with the capacity to produce nuclear weapons, has signed a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We welcome that, but we attach great importance to regular IAEA inspections of South African nuclear sites in order to rid our continent of these terrifying weapons.

With respect to non-military threats to the peace and security of our States, the Minister for External Relations of Zaire, in his statement to the General Assembly on 24 September 1992, appealed for solidarity among peoples and Governments of the South and of the North with a view to achieving shared prosperity. He said:

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"It is true that underdevelopment will not go away overnight simply because the prosperous countries of the North decide to make available to third-world countries financial resources resulting from cutbacks they may make in their military budgets; rather it will be ended by strategies to do away with the dire poverty of the nations of Africa and other underdeveloped countries". (A/47/PV.11, p. 103)

On the basis of those considerations, Zaire takes the view that the resolution on the link between disarmament and development should be implemented in order to find the resources needed to solve the painful problems our peoples are facing.

Let me recall that among the key objectives of the United Nations Charter is the maintenance of international peace and security. It goes without saying that there are political prerequisites for international peace and security, including respect for human rights, the enjoyment of civil and political rights and the introduction of democracy - which requires tolerance, pluralism of opinion reflected in the establishment of political parties and so on.

It is towards those objectives that the people of my country is heading after a long night that led us far from the path of comprehensive development of the individual and his environment. While the political reforms under way in the countries of Eastern Europe are signs of progress and hope, we call on the international community to support our peoples as they strive to win the freedom of an economic and social development that we must share as equal partners with the other citizens of the world.

Mr. AL-NASSER (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): As this is my delegation's first statement before the Committee this session, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the

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Committee. That choice is justified by the distinguished position of your country, the fraternal Arab Republic of Egypt, in the international community. We are confident that your rich diplomatic experience and your knowledge of the matters at hand will help ensure the success of your term of office, just as you have always been successful in all your remarkable achievements.

I should like also to convey our thanks to your predecessor for the excellent manner in which he guided the work of the Committee last session.

I wish also to express the sincere solidarity of my delegation with the great people of Egypt and condole with them over the calamity of the recent earthquake, hoping that they will put it behind them and resume their country's march towards progress and prosperity.

The détente in the climate of international relations and the end of confrontation between the two military blocs mark the emergence of a positive new era which will have a direct impact on the success of disarmament efforts, especially in the nuclear field.

My delegation hails the notable progress achieved in this direction between the United States of America and the Russian Federation as reflected in agreements between them and the reciprocal reductions in their nuclear stockpiles, jointly declared at their Moscow summit meeting in June of last year. This augurs well for the conclusion, in a reasonably short period of time, of a partial nuclear-test-ban Treaty as a first step toward the comprehensive test-ban which is the best means of safeguarding the security of all.

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In connection with nuclear disarmament, my delegation welcomes the accession of both the People's Republic of China and of France to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Thus, all permanent members of the Security Council have now become parties to the Treaty and are bound by its provisions. As we look forward to the extension of the Treaty in the extension Conference to be held by the parties in 1995, we cannot fail to note that in our sensitive region, which is not short of causes for dispute, there is a State that adamantly refuses to join the Treaty in order for it to continue to be the only State in the region that possesses nuclear capabilities, and thus continues to impose its will on all the other States in the region. This is a form of State terrorism that cannot be condoned by international community.

The draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and Their Destruction, which is before our Committee, is an important achievement of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Disarmament Conference, for which it should be commended. Our colleague from Germany who chaired the Ad Hoc Committee gave an excellent summary of the main points of the draft Convention in his statement of 13 October before this Committee. Consequently, there is no need to dwell further on the advantages of the draft Convention.

However, under the sensitive circumstances prevailing in the Middle East to which I alluded earlier, it is practically impossible to deal with the draft Convention on chemical weapons in isolation, separately from other conventions dealing with different types of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. They should all be considered together. In this regard, I refer to the statement of the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs before this Committee. He referred to the importance of

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regional disarmament and of security-building measures between the States of every region. In this regard, the Middle East stands out because of the continuing tensions and the slow pace of the process which is supposed to lead a comprehensive and just peace. The said peace process would be given greater momentum if disarmament efforts, particularly with regard to weapons of mass destruction, were to be expanded to embrace the Middle East region just like other regions of the world.

This posture of one particular State in the region, to which I have just referred, continues to be an obstacle that prevents other States of the region from sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1. It is in fact necessary that all States in the region, without exception and on a footing of equality , accept all international conventions dealing with weapons of mass destruction.

It would be useful here to refer to what was said by our colleague, the representative of the United Kingdom who spoke for the States of the European Community. He said that regional arms control and disarmament measures should focus initially on the most destabilizing military capabilities in any region. Regional measures, he said, can complement bilateral and multilateral negotiations and facilitate global arms control and disarmament. The European Community's statement made it clear that regional disarmament measures necessarily differed from one region to the other in line with the specific circumstances of each region. However, there are certain fundamental considerations that apply to all regions irrespective of differing circumstances. The most important consideration in this respect is that regional disarmament should focus, above all, on the most destabilizing military capabilities in the region. Now, if we apply this to the Middle East, we should conclude that priority should be given to the control of

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nuclear capabilities, which only a single State in the region possesses while persistently refusing to adhere to the non-proliferation Treaty or to subject its installations to the international safeguards regime.

The references to the European Community should illustrate the fact that reservations about the draft Convention on chemical weapons have a legitimate justification recognized and appreciated by all States of the world. Such reservations are not arbitrary or without objective justification.

The Arab States, and particularly those of the Gulf region, are especially concerned with the elimination of chemical weapons. This concern is due to the threat of use of such weapons during the military operations of two years ago. The States of the region are therefore keen to spare themselves and the entire world the incalculable risks inherent in the use of chemical weapons. But the lack of parity between the capabilities of one State in the region and those of all its other States in the area of weapons of mass destruction obstructs the pursuit of the aforementioned objective. It is to be hoped that the international community, embodied in the United Nations, will take a leading role in urging all the States of the region to take the measures that may lead to turning the Middle East into a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia): I wish to join previous speakers in extending to you, Sir, the representative of friendly Egypt, sincere condolences on the loss of many lives and the extensive material damage that resulted from the earthquake that struck your country earlier this week.

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you warmly on your unanimous election as Chairman of this important Committee. We are confident that your rich diplomatic experience and knowledge of the matters at hand will help

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ensure the success of our work. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

I am particularly pleased to see Under-Secretary-General Petrovsky and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Berasategui, and I wish them every success in the discharge of their important responsibilities at this historic juncture.

The world community is living through unique and remarkable times. Challenges of unprecedented magnitude and new opportunities are features of our time. But, first and foremost, this is the time to reassess the concepts and policies of the bipolar world and to engage in a common search for a safer future in the post-cold-war multipolar world. It is gratifying to note that the underlying concept of security as a complex and multifaceted conjuncture of the interrelated components of development, democracy and disarmament is gaining increasing recognition in the policies of States.

The United Nations is emerging as a focal point in the harmonizing of the international community's efforts to solve peacefully and satisfactorily the existing conflicts and most importantly to suppress threats to international peace and security in the future. In this context, the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace" is a timely and highly commendable document contributing to both the conceptual and the practical aspects of the work of the world Organization in the new and changing realities of international relations.

My delegation hopes that the emerging new international environment will make it possible for the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, to address the multitude of issues on its agenda with new vigour and a new sense of urgency and commitment. We are

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

heartened by the fact that the Conference on Disarmament, after years of painstaking efforts, has finally concluded its work on the chemical weapons Convention.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

My delegation intends to make a separate statement on the draft Convention on chemical weapons later in the general debate, but I should nevertheless like to congratulate all those who have actively contributed to its success, in particular the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, for his dedicated work and able stewardship. The Convention, in our view, would significantly strengthen international peace and security by not only eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction but also by serving as a milestone and a point of reference in future multilateral disarmament endeavours.

The changes in the overall international security environment seem to have shifted somewhat the general focus of the international disarmament agenda. The imminent danger of global nuclear confrontation is gradually being replaced by a fragmentation of international tension, and the increasing threat of unchecked proliferation and dissemination of conventional weapons as well as weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery looms large as a predominant security concern for many. That should not, however, invalidate the relevance of nuclear arms control as a priority item on the international disarmament agenda and their eventual elimination as a fundamental goal of all disarmament efforts.

The actual process of nuclear disarmament launched by the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - was propitiously continued through the conclusion of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), whose ratification by both sides seems to be imminent.

Mongolia welcomes the 16 June 1992 agreement between Presidents Bush and Yeltsin on further cuts in nuclear-weapon arsenals and anticipates far-reaching developments in this direction in the future.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

The disintegration of the former Soviet Union and economic and social difficulties in the newly independent States cast a new light on the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons, their technology and the know-how to produce them.

The 23 May 1992 Lisbon Protocol to tne START Treaty is a very important development that augurs well for peace and stability in the world and the ongoing process of nuclear disarmament.

My delegation also wishes to note with satisfaction the announced intention of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to join the non-proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and looks forward to the implementation of that commitment in the shortest possible time.

As a country in the heart of Asia, Mongolia watches with keen interest the bilateral talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea and welcomes the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula

Any steps that might be conducive to confidence-building in the region will find the unreserved support of the Government of Mongolia. Here, I wish to point out that the seminars on security- and confidence-building in the Asia-Pacific region held at Kathmandu, Hiroshima and Shanghai by the United Nations in cooperation with host countries were successful in terms of fostering the exchange of ideas and proved to be useful.

Various initiatives taken by countries in Latin America, namely, the Cartagena Declaration, the Mendoza Agreement and the agreement between Brazil and Argentina for the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy, bring the total triumph of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America even closer. The success of the Tlatelolco and Raratonga Treaties is

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solid testimony to the effectiveness of the regional approach to disarmament, and to non-proliferation in particular. Mongolia hopes that the ongoing efforts to create such zones in South Asia, the Middle East and Africa will be encouraged by these examples and that the long-sought progress will eventually become possible.

The geo-political situation of Mongolia is rather unique. We have only two neighbours and both of them are nuclear-weapon Powers. A third country to which Mongolia is geographically very close also has nuclear weapons on its territory, at least at the moment. In these circumstances, to contribute to confidence- and security-building in the region Mongolia proclaimed its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone, as declared by President Ochirbat of Mongolia in his address to the General Assembly on 25 September this year. We intend to seek credible security assurances from the States possessing nuclear weapons to respect the status of Mongolia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We hope that the traditional ties of friendship and close cooperation that Mongolia enjoys with its neighbours will facilitate this exercise.

The Mongolian delegation fully shares the view that the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons constitutes one of the burning security issues of today. My delegation is convinced that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the present non-proliferation system. Therefore, we have always stood for the universality of the NPT. It is gratifying to note that China and France have recently acceded to the Treaty, thereby bringing all nuclear-weapon States into it. In our view, this creates a qualitatively new situation for the strengthening of the nuclear

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

non-proliferation régime. Mongolia, like many others, advocates the indefinite extension of the NPT at its next Review Conference on 1995.

At the latest sessions of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as here in the First Committee, interesting ideas have been put forward to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. A call has been made by some delegations for Security Council sanctions to be imposed on any State that fails to fulfil its obligations under the Treaty. That and other ideas, in our opinion, deserve careful consideration.

One of the priority objectives of nuclear disarmament is the cessation of nuclear tests for weapons purposes. Mongolia has consistently advocated the urgent conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The conclusion of such a treaty, in our opinion, will be a significant contribution to nuclear non-proliferation in both its vertical and horizontal dimensions.

My delegation welcomes the unilateral moratoriums on nuclear testing announced by the Russian Federation and France as well as the recently enacted law of the United States to restrict its nuclear-testing programme. We hope that this trend of conducting less powerful tests less frequently will be built upon and contributed to by other nuclear-weapon States, in particular our southern neighbour, and lead to an eventual halt of all nuclear testing.

The Conference on Disarmament has an important role in carrying out negotiations to achieve that objective. Regrettably, the Conference on Disarmament at its 1992 session failed to reestablish the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, as envisioned in the provisions of the General Assembly resolution 46/29. In this regard, we strongly believe that the Conference on Disarmament should establish an Ad Hoc Committee with a negotiating mandate.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

The Conference on Disarmament is taking a look at its composition, agenda and working methods in an effort to reflect in its proceedings the changing international environment. The initiation of this work has the full understanding and support of the Mongolian delegation.

We stand ready to participate in the consulations on this important question at this session of the General Assembly.

The Gulf war and its aftermath have clearly demonstrated the threat to international security posed by the excessive and destabilising accumulation of conventional weapons. A good start towards promoting transparency in armaments was given last year by the General Assembly decision to set up a United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Today, we note with satisfaction that the Register has been established and that a panel of experts has submitted a consensus report.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

These efforts have been fittingly supplemented by the set of substantial guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its substantive session earlier this year. Mongolia commends the outcome of the Commission's session and expects to see similar progress on other items under consideration, especially "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security". The attainment of consensus on this item might prove to be useful in defining and strengthening the role of regional organizations in conflict-resolution.

In the course of the present session, my delegation intends to submit a draft resolution entitled "Disarmament Week". Observed annually since 1978, Disarmament Week has been instrumental in educating the general public about the disarmament process and in mobilizing public opinion in favour of comprehensive arms-limitation and disarmament efforts. Let me note that, for the purpose of contributing to the rationalization of procedures and to streamlining the work of the First Committee, my delegation undertook an initiative three years ago to bring a draft resolution on this subject to the General Assembly on a triennial basis. We are contemplating a critical review of this draft resolution after the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Let me express the hope that the membership of the First Committee will render full support to this draft resolution.

Mr. JAPARIDZE (Georgia): Since this is the first time the delegation of the Republic of Georgia has spoken here, permit me, Sir, to express our satisfaction at your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. This is a recognition of your diplomatic and professional qualities, as well as of the prominent role your country plays in the world.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

Let me also express, on behalf of the Georgian political leadership, our sincere condolences on the occasion of the terrible earthquake that occurred in your country.

A couple of days ago Georgia held parliamentary elections. Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze was elected Chairman of the Georgian Parliament by a landslide. After a brief unforeseen detour, the country is on its way to rejoining the family of civilized nations. We are at the beginning of the democratic path. The destination is known. However, the actual characteristics and nature of the reforms will have to comply with the long-term national interests of the country. Thus, it is quite natural to try to identify some major elements of Georgia's doctrine of national interests. Of course, that doctrine is now under development by Parliament, the Government and academia, and not all of its components are in place yet. Nevertheless, one can already say that disarmament and security issues will have a permanent and lasting significance.

Why does Georgia, which itself has no military structure and possesses very few weapons, place so much emphasis on disarmament? There is no single or simple answer to this question. Without claiming to be overly exhaustive or comprehensive, I will try to deal with some of the most important reasons.

First, Georgia is situated in one of the most volatile regions of the world, where the geostrategic interests of dominant regional Powers have traditionally been played out and settled throughout the centuries.

Secondly, the Caucasus region is in close proximity to two no less complex regions, namely the Balkans and the Middle East.

Thirdly, Georgia and the Caucasus in general are situated along the trade routes between Asia and Europe. It is vitally important to keep this area peaceful and stable to ensure that this route is used for peaceful purposes only and not as a gateway for arms, drugs and the like.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

We take all these elements into serious consideration. Our long-term strategic interest is to build Georgia, which follows a policy of active neutrality, which is friendly and which is developing mutually beneficial relations with other countries of the region and beyond. As a member of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Georgia will endeavour to establish and maintain constructive ties with members of other regional and political organizations.

In the economic field, Georgia will aim at building a free-market economy, a task which will not be easy to implement. We will, whenever possible, promote an "open-door" policy. Opening our country to foreign investments goes hand in hand with having access to world economic and financial organizations. And this is already happening: we are members of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the economic-cooperation system of the Black Sea countries and so on.

Militarily, Georgia will maintain the minimum number of armed forces, the number necessary for its self-defence only. We agree with the key tenets of non-provocative defence postures. We do not have any territorial claims regarding any country, and we expect reciprocal respect for our sovereignty and territorial integrity.

However, there are foreign troops stationed in Georgia. We propose to start formal talks as soon as possible regarding their temporary status and withdrawal schedule. The definition of their status should be based on existing practices and precedents in the world, as well as on the principles of international law. We are ready to share the experiences of those countries which have military bases and troops in other countries, as well as the experiences of those which have bases and troops of other countries stationed in their territories.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

The issue of the stationing of foreign troops in Georgia has a rather new and untraditional aspect. It is well known that, as of 1 January 1993, States Members of the United Nations will begin to report on conventional arms for the United Nations Register Georgia intends to file the relevant report. Unfortunately, troops deployed in Georgia, at the level of field commanders, conduct very lucrative arms-trade ventures without the knowledge or consent of either the Government of Georgia or the Government of Russia. In such circumstances, it is obvious that Georgia cannot be responsible for the arms transfers originating from its territory.

Georgia will abide by the relevant international agreements and treaties which create a network of global non-proliferation regimes for various weapons, and especially of nuclear, chemical, biological and - most vital for us - conventional weapons.

These elements of our doctrine of national interests would be incomplete without the concept of national security and its place within the framework of regional and global security.

What are the main components of the modern notion of security, and how do we Georgians interpret them? Let me say a few words on that subject. The international community increasingly recognizes the fact that security as a concept has to be considered within a new military strategic, political and socio-economic context. This context can be loosely referred to as the new world order, within which are usually included emerging cooperation and global partnerships.*

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* Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

The setting-up of the new world order will require that the community of nations find the readiness to act in a truly united way, with an unprecedentedly high degree of consensus and joint effort. This will be possible only if countries, big or small, base their actions on global morality, representing justice, peace, disarmament, democracy, development, human rights and the rule of law.

The new world order should be based on a system of collective security, which in the modern world is a multifaceted notion. It can and should be pursued in different directions and on different levels. For example, it is becoming increasingly clear that the security of a nation is not synonymous with its military strength and cannot be achieved at the expense of the security interests of other nations. Rather, it is a complex combination of different factors - to mention only a few: a viable economy, free access to world markets, a healthy environment and freedom of information.

National security considerations remain a cornerstone of international or collective security. With the changes in the world, the concept of national security is evolving by the incorporation into it of the transnational responsibilities that stem from interdependence. Accordingly, the substance of collective security is undergoing some transformation as well. Thus, the concept of security is increasingly associated with non-military means of deterrence and war prevention. Today, political, economic, legal, moral, psychological and environmental factors play more active roles than the military elements of security. If disarmament is no longer the most important issue of security today, why then do we place that much importance on this issue?

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

First, disarmament continues to play the role of a system-creating factor. Secondly, it is not so much disarmament per se that we are concerned with; rather, we are focusing our attention on the so-called collateral and accompanying measures which have come to be known as post-disarmament activities. These issues point to the fact that for disarmament to continue in its present important role it is necessary to transcend the traditional goals of reducing or destroying weapons. Rather, old conflicts should be re-examined and new regional or global conflicts should be prevented through the introduction of regimes and machinery of a fundamentally new nature.

There is little argument over the fact that severe limitations have been placed on the international peace-keeping machinery by world events, and that as a result this machinery cannot adjust to the ongoing changes fast enough. In order to keep up with the pace of the changes, the existing machinery can be slightly altered in some cases; in other instances, this machinery has to be kept intact. But in most cases we have to create a completely new security mechanism and adopt a new frame of reference.

For example, in disarmament we now have the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the new chemical weapons secretariat, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the relevant structures of the Treaty on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe; in the very near future, we might have some kind of verification structure for the biological weapons Convention. As the world community starts to address other disarmament issues, one cannot exclude some kind of new body, with all five nuclear-weapon States as participants, to watch over universal nuclear disarmament. There is also the possibility of a new organization for world-wide conventional disarmament or arms-transfer reductions, and so on.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

What we are witnessing is a proliferation of disarmament bodies. These organizations are costly and need a large amount of resources. Perhaps it is time to think about a world-wide arms-control and disarmament agency as a separate specialized agency of the United Nations. This global agency will cover all the respective disarmament fields, from weapons of mass destruction to monitoring, verification, confidence-building measures and conversion, and, of course, a multilateral negotiations framework.

From our point of view, such an organization will help to bring into focus mankind's efforts to rid itself of weapons and bring disarmament closer to the "Agenda for Peace" for the 1990s and beyond. The implementation of such machinery for comprehensive arms control, disarmament and conflict resolution may inspire energetic efforts around the world. In this context, let me say that we fully support the idea of regional centres for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-keeping. But we go beyond that and call for a new network of regional security structures, which will be a pillar for global security.

Indeed, why should we a priori limit the sphere of such emerging structures to specific tasks alone? We should be aiming at wider goals wherever possible. For example, in the Caucasus we could create a security structure that would include a mechanism for consultations, conflict settlement and monitoring. This structure could promote openness and transparency as a first step for regional confidence-building measures. This Caucasian structure would form a part of the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Still other efforts might relate to the strengthening of existing regional non-proliferation regimes and the creation of new ones.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

As is well known, the perception of threat has been dramatically altered and the risk of war has diminished to the point of non-existence. Nevertheless, we cannot speak of a lasting peace when we are all well aware of the terrible ethnic conflicts and border disputes claiming thousands of lives and bringing great hardship to civilian populations. Should we not find a new framework for disarmament that could be instrumental in bringing these conflicts to an end? Of course, we should. Some aspects we shall have to invent in the future; others are already in existence. For example, reduction of and, in some cases, a complete ban on arms transfers could become an effective tool in bringing about a just and equitable solution to regional conflicts.

We believe that the unchecked acquisition of arms, for whatever purpose and from whatever source, has traditionally created and continues to create deep suspicions, and serves as a material basis for insecurity, be it regional or global. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is very much alive in various parts of the world, including my own region.

From that perspective, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is an important confidence-building measure as well as an instrument for transparency and openness. However, perhaps it is time to consider seriously setting up independent regional registers open to members of the region in question. Perhaps there are other aspects as well.

There is no doubt that the reduction of nuclear weapons by Russia and the United States and the successful completion of the Geneva negotiations on banning chemical weapons have a most positive political and psychological effect on the rest of the world and could stimulate the chain reaction of practical disarmament measures at regional levels.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

A lot has been said and written about the importance and urgency of regional disarmament. Without repeating these well-known arguments here, we would only add the following consideration. Care must be taken to tailor the objectives of arms control to individual regions. This may call for, among other things, the increased legal, political, and consultative involvement of the United Nations in regional security and disarmament arrangements, either directly or through Member States that are Powers outside those regions. The United Nations could also be called on as an enforcer of agreed regional security measures or structures.

One of the major issues requiring drastic rethinking is military doctrines and concepts. So far, attention has been focused primarily on the development of elements of defensive security concepts. Such concepts obviously will incorporate basic tenets of minimal deterrence, which deserve a new look. But positive as it may be, minimal deterrence is based on weapons of mass destruction. It cannot be used other than to prevent or meet direct military threats and is practically useless in the face of non-military sources of instability.

Without weakening various ongoing efforts in the area of defensive security concepts, the community of nations can simultaneously initiate work on non-military deterrence concepts. The first stage would be to identify non-military deterrents, both positive and negative.

(Mr. Japaridze, Georgia)

Just one more consideration before I conclude my statement: It is a fact of life that armed forces remain an important element in guaranteeing national sovereignty and territorial integrity. As a result, any move by these forces within national boundaries for defensive purposes is admissible and cannot be interpreted as aggression or occupation. International law in general - and international agreements, conventions or covenants in particular - do not recognize the notion of self-aggression or self-occupation.

Why do we now bring up this issue? Recently, in Abkhazia, one of the regions of the Republic of Georgia, a conflict with secessionist overtones was prompted and unleashed by criminal elements in Abkhazia together with foreign mercenaries. This occurred under, to put it mildly, a very strange pretext, namely, the movement of Georgian State troops from one part of the country to another. Since this is an everyday occurrence in every country, we think that the United Nations, other international organizations and world public opinion should adopt a firm and unequivocal attitude towards such occurrences, one that clearly separates the legitimate rights of Member States to self-defence from subversive acts of illegal military and paramilitary formations bent on toppling democratically elected Governments.

A lot has been achieved in the field of disarmament over the past two years. Still more remains to be achieved. The disarmament agenda is crowded, but not because someone wants to put as many marginal issues on it as possible. Not at all. For the first time in its history the agenda has been dictated by events themselves, and for the first time the priorities have been established by the inner logic of the evolution of mankind.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.